

February 14, 2023

Dear Human Services and Aging Committee Members:

I'm writing to state my opposition to the legislative proposal to mandate a 4.1 per day direct care minimum staffing levels in CT nursing homes which is included in SB989. I have been the Administrator at Pendleton Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, a 120 bed nursing home located in Mystic, for 31 years, and although I have never seen a more difficult staffing crisis, this proposal is NOT the solution we need. We currently struggle to staff our facility on a daily basis, shift by shift, with our staff and Agency staff. We have to pay extremely high rates for Agency staff because so many nursing staff (nurses and aides) have either left the workforce during and after the COVID pandemic or have left facility employment to work for agencies. Recent recruitment efforts to hire are own staff, especially in Southeastern CT, have resulted in minimal to little new hires as compared to the past, even with significant wage increases. This unfunded staffing mandate proposal will not create the workers we need. It will only worsen our situation by putting us out of compliance with a new mandate that is not achievable at this time. The highest priority should be for the industry and the government to work together to invest and support initiatives and programs to develop the long term care workforce dedicated to care for the most vulnerable population. Please DO NOT approve this unfunded mandate.

Sincerely,



Sue Peglow

Administrator